

- 1 3 years before the start of the Second World War, the Olympic Games were held in Berlin, the capital of Hitler's Germany. 53 nations were competing, and the Games were designed to show to the world how advanced, cultured and powerful Germany had become.
- 2 On the opening day, the first-ever German champion of any Olympics was Hans Woellke, having won in the shotput. Hitler insisted that the champion be paraded before him.
- 3 Strict racial laws had come into force in Germany. Just a few years from then, millions of Jews (amongst others) would be murdered. Meanwhile the Olympic team of the United States included Jews and coloured people. Hitler had called black people an "inferior race". Those same people dominated the sprints and hurdles and field events.
- 4 On this day, the star of those 1936 Olympics - Jesse Owens, a black American - won the 200 metre race in a record 20.7 seconds. Hitler was furious. Publicly he had congratulated other Olympic winners but, on seeing Jesse Owens win, Hitler immediately left the stadium. Hitler refused to acknowledge Jesse Owens - one of the world's greatest athletes - because he was black, an African American. Instead, Hitler congratulated privately the silver medallist, who was a German.
- 5 *Let us pray:*

**Lord, I pray for all who suffer  
from hatred and prejudice,  
from abuse and ill-treatment,  
and for all who are victims  
of what others do.**

**I pray, too, for the people of violence,  
that they may change their ways  
and learn to respect others.**

**I pray for myself,  
that when I face  
what is negative or evil  
I may have  
the courage and generosity  
to break the cycle  
of violence, hatred, fear or distrust,  
and make my own choices  
and take responsibility  
for the direction  
in which I want my life to go.  
I pray that I may always do to others  
as I would wish them to do to me.  
Amen.**



 *During the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Jesse Owens won 4 gold medals. He equalled the Olympic Record of 10.30 seconds for the 100 metre sprint. He gained new Olympic and World records of 20.7 seconds for the 200 metre sprint. He set a new Olympic Record with his long jump of 8.05 metres. He was one of the 4-man relay team of 4x100 metres, setting a new Olympic and World Record of 39.8 seconds.*

 *Jesse Owens: 1913-1980.*

 *Alternative prayers would be those of 29 January, 21 March (detailing Jesus' involvement with people from different nations), 27 June.*

 *Though the mountains may fall ("run and never tire"); Yahweh, I know ("Where can I run from your love?")*

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:  
[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)